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Many ways to save planet  
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北京青年报  
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY

# Finding Green Beijing

By Yu Shanshan

If you are traveling in Beijing in October, a chat with a Beijing-ner would probably begin with, "Ah, luckily, you've arrived during the best season!"

September and October, as anyone will tell you, is definitely the optimum time to be in China's capital – the sky is high and blue, the air is cool and clean.

On the heels of October is the infamous worst season – comprised of polluted air and spring sandstorms.

On the cusp of that, *Beijing Today* presents this special issue, telling you about "Green Beijing" – what the city had in the past, what it aims for in the future and the endeavors to achieve it.

You may remember the green Beijing of the past as the Chinese government strives to have a "Green Beijing" Olympics in 2008. NGOs also have plans for the last three months of 2007.

Education is the foundation for building an eco-friendly, aware China. Have a look at what university campuses are doing.

The real "green" things happen in daily life, such as what people wear, what's on the table, in the home and on the street.

*Beijing Today* has two pages to discover the eco-friendly trends in this city and a few travel articles to guide readers through green Beijing suburbs. Read about people who are working hard to realize "sustainable development" in their own special way.

Beijing is at a certain stage of development. It used to be a quiet and clean capital city, and we believe it will last forever. Complaining is always easier than effecting change.

Ask not what Beijing can do for you; ask what you can do for a green Beijing.

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Illustration by Yang Gen and Chen Xingxing

# When I was a child, Beijing was a city of ...

By He Jianwei

Beijing is on its way to becoming an international city and is showing its modern face to the world: skyscrapers towering high, over-head viaducts crossing the roads and peo-

ple's quickened pace in the city. What did the city of Beijing look like ten years, 20 years or even 30 years ago?

*Beijing Today* interviewed several native people in Beijing. They talked about the envi-

ronment during their childhood in the city. Today's world is facing the same problems as it did in the past. Of course, in some areas, the city has improved a lot today as compared with the earlier years.

"I should have prepared more clothes for summer," I said to myself after checking my closet. From May to September, I wore T-shirts every day but now, because of the greenhouse effect, the summers seem much longer every year.

The first time I came to Beijing was in May, 1986. "It's a beautiful season in Beijing," one of my relatives said to my parents before we decided to visit the city. Every day was sunny that May and the sky was so azure that it looked like a painting in a picture book.

That was my impression of the city over 20 years ago. I wondered what people who had lived there for many years thought of the city. Through these interviews, we might not get a panoramic view of the city of old but we might get a better idea by using some key words and phrases.

## 1960s

Song Weiguo, born in the 1960s, lived in Lumiang, Dongcheng District throughout his childhood

### Moat

In Song's mind, his childhood memories were related to the moat. "As someone shouted 'Let's go swimming,' a group of children would scurry out of the house and jump into the moat," he said.

Song's house was not far from the moat and he always went to the part of it located near Jianguomen. Today, it's buried under high buildings and the Second Ring Road.

"We not only went swimming in the moat but also caught fish and shrimp in the river," he said.

Near the moat, there was a wooded area. "We often caught crickets, cicadas and dragonflies there," he laughed.

He made the tools for catching the insects himself. "We used an old abandoned window screen, iron wire and a bamboo rod to make a net to catch the dragonflies."

### The trolley

The city's first trolley hit the streets in the late 1950s. The trolley transit system developed fast in the 1960s and about one fourth of all trolley lines opened during that period.

Besides the bicycle, the trolley was the main mode of transportation used by citizens in those days. "We never gave a thought to protecting the environment back then. The trolley maintained its position of popularity in the 1950s, because railroad tracks were not safe for transportation. Most people rode bicycles on the road," he said.

The children in those days had a special connection to the trolley car. "We usually went for an outing by trolley. It was a happy time for our children. The vehicle moved with astonishing speed in a child's eyes," he said.

"Starting in the 1970s, more and more buses replaced the trolleys. However, we know the trolley is good for air quality and there will be more and more of them in the city in the future," he claimed.



Ben Zhang

## 1970s

Ben Zhang, born in the 1970s, lived near the campus of China Agriculture University, Haidian District in his childhood.

### Rice field

In the late 1970s, there were many corn fields near Zhang's house. The rice field was a paradise to children. "I often caught toads and catfish in the rice fields when I was a child," he said.

At harvest time, the vast stretches of paddy fields turned yellow. "It looked so beautiful when the wind blew."

Walking along the ridge of the rice fields was a good childhood memory. "Sometimes I dug the edible wild vegetables near the ridge."

The vast open fields were covered with grass and flowers. "It only took ten minutes to get

there. On weekends, I usually brought my rabbit and played with it. The adults shadow boxed in the woods nearby, as the air was fresh and clean," he said.

As well as the rice fields, there were plenty of cornfields nearby. "I stole corn from those fields. Of course, it was just kid's play."

Dragonflies, butterflies and crickets were his best friends in those childhood days. "It was interesting to catch fireflies. I used them as a light inside a glass bottle," he said.

### Water

The tap water before seemed much clearer. "I often drank the water directly from the tap as a child and never got sick, but if you do that today, you might easily fall ill," he said.

Around the rice fields, there were many canals containing abundant water, but it was polluted by waste. The hospitals near the canals dumped their garbage into the canals directly. "The canals have been controlled and regulated by the government in recent years, but the canal water is not plentiful."

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## 1980s

Wang Hui and her cousin Yi Xin, born in the 1980s, lived in Baiguang Lu, Xuanwu District during their childhood years.

Liu Xu, born in the 1980s, lived in Bawangfen, Chaoyang District.

## Trees

Wang and Yi's house was in a *hutong* that has now been replaced with high buildings. "In the yard the locust trees were very tall and thick but are long gone now due to construction," Wang said.

"Although the trees in the 1980s didn't stand orderly in two rows like today, they were ancient and much higher, thicker and greener than what you see today," Yi said.

## Bugs and frogs

When it rained, snails could be sighted everywhere in the yard. Spring was a good time to catch various insects. "Sometimes I would see a praying mantis clinging to my window screen," Wang said.

In the early autumn, there were many moths and in summer the kids' favorite game was to catch cicadas and dragonflies. "Sometimes we would find long-horned beetles but we don't see them any more. Earlier this September, I went to Panjiayuan and found long-horned beetles being sold for quite a few yuan," Yi said.

Near Liu's house there were plenty of rice fields. "Every summer, I always went to the field with my playmates to play with frogs. We seemed more harmonious with wild creatures in those days," Liu said.

## Rain and Snow

The sky was quite blue in the old days. "In winter the sky looked clear and transparent, which made me feel lonely, so I was afraid to look up for a long time," Yi said.

In Wang's memory, the snow in her childhood seemed much whiter than today. "When it snowed, you could make a giant snowman," Wang said.

"Today's snow and rain is dirty. People who are out in it should wash their hair immediately when they come back home. Repeated exposure to rain and snow will make people lose their hair," Wang said.

"The rain was clear in those days and I always washed my sandals in the rain. When it snowed, I could even see the hexagon structure of a snowflake in my hand, but I seldom see that beautiful snow today," Liu said.

## Seasons

The four seasons could be easily separated in the past. "The autumn now in Beijing is getting shorter and shorter. We didn't use air conditioners in the summers of my childhood and could even see the stars clearly in the summer nights," Liu said.

"The winters were much colder forcing us to wear cotton-padded trousers," Liu said.



## 1990s



Li Wen, born in the late 1980s, lived in Wudaokou, Haidian District.

## Pigeon whistle

Li's house from her childhood has now been exploited by real estate agents. She lived in a single story building when she was a child. It had a good view of the sky from the patio of her house.

"I really enjoyed the pigeon's whistle, when a flock flew by. I always wondered where the pigeons came from and where they were headed," she said.

"But I seldom hear the pigeon's sound anymore. Maybe because less people raise pigeons nowadays or possibly because of the air pollution," she said.

## Sandstorms

The sandstorm is a newcomer to this city and initially arrived in 1998. Sun was a primary student when she was introduced to her first sandstorm.

"After my class, I went home by bicycle. I found the sky was yellow and full of dust. It was hard to breathe. After I arrived home, I looked like a clay figure and my mouth was full of dust," she said.

She didn't know she had experienced a sandstorm at the time. When she asked her parents, they told her that the city had never seen such serious sandstorms before.

## Cockroach

When you ask native Beijingers over 25, they will tell you they never saw cockroaches in their childhood. According to statistics from the Beijing Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention, now over 45 percent of households have been invaded by cockroaches.

"When I told my parents that I found a cockroach in our kitchen, they didn't believe me at first. They said they had never seen a cockroach in the house before," she said.

"But it is a common thing for us to deal with cockroaches in our houses or dormitories at college," she said.



All 31 Olympic venues, renewed existing venues, newly constructed venues or temporary ones are all designed with the "Green Olympic" spirit, incorporating the concept of sustainable development into the preparation and operation of the 2008 Olympic Games.

Although preparing for the Olympic Games is a huge, complicated project, it must be guided by the fundamental policy of environmental protection. Regarding the venue construction, some steps have been taken to minimize the related negative impacts.

## National Indoor Stadium energy-saving at its best

By He Jianwei

National Indoor Stadium (NIS) in the shape of an unfolding Chinese traditional fan, boasts a steel roof structure system and bi-directional truss string structure.

Technologies such as slag used for trench backfill, natural lighting and solar photovoltaic devices, were utilized in the construction. NIS fully embodies the theme of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, namely Green Olympics, High-tech Olympics and People's Olympics. The completed NIS will be the biggest indoor stadium in China with a maximum seating capacity of 20,000 spectators.

During the Games and the Paralympic Games, gymnastics, trampoline, handball final competitions and wheelchair basketball competitions will be held here. NIS' construction was undertaken by Guoao Investment and Development Co. Ltd. Zhang Jingdong, General Manager of Guoao Investment introduced the highlights of NIS' contribution to the Green Olympics.

"The steel roof truss is a two-way string steel truss structure with a world's largest span. This design specializes in light weight, balanced load, firm structure and a smaller consumption of steel material," Zhang said.

The steel roof truss weights 2,800 tons with the span of 144.5 meters from north to the south and 114 meters from east to west.

Waste slag instead of sandstone was utilized in the backfill of the NIS foundation. The source of the backfill slag comes from the surplus of the Capital Iron and Steel Company.

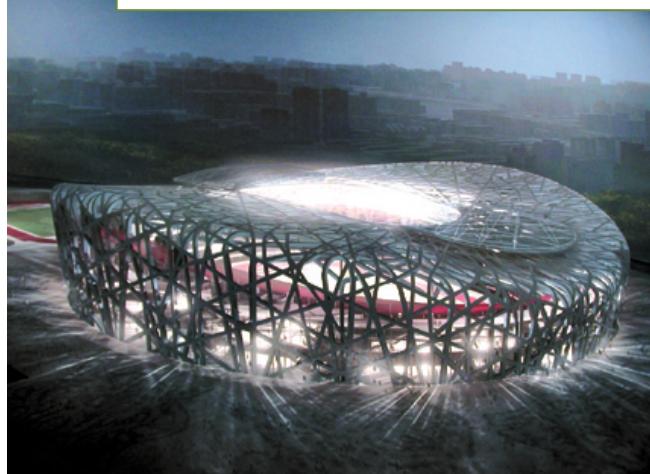
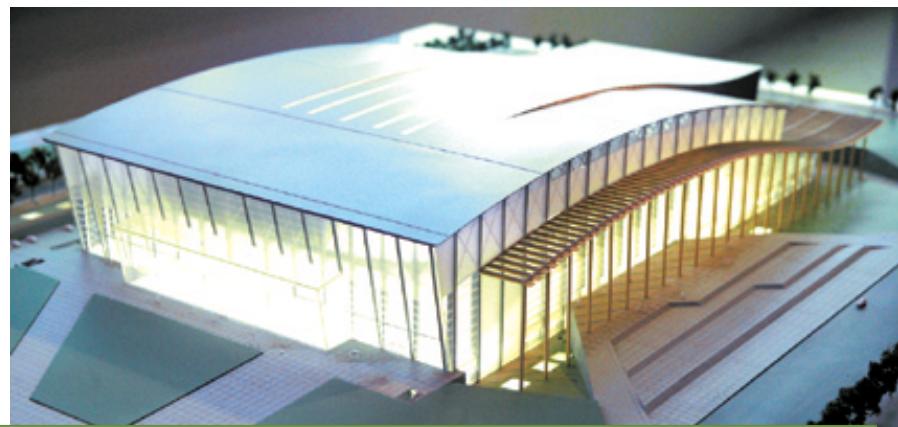
"By using this particular slag as backfill we have, on one hand, met the construction needs of the NIS and, on the other hand, answered the call of the Green Olympics, turning 80,000 tons of waster material into wealth and creating a shorter construction time," he said.

The roof of the NIS is equipped

with 100-kilowatt solar cells, which can meet the lighting needs in the underground garage of the stadium. "This is also the only photovoltaic power generating project in the Olympic center area. It has effectively saved electrical energy," he said.

A collection and distribution square used by the NIS infiltrates ground materials, so that rainwater can permeate at high levels. "The rainwater on the roofing, after processing, can be collected and used for flushing lavatories, watering plants and cleaning the roads," he said.

The air conditioning system at the National Indoor Stadium is equipped and controlled in different areas.



By Chu Meng

Since the beginning of the design process, architects have kept in mind the function of the

National Stadium both during and after the Games.

"We opted to use translucent materials to fill the spaces between

## The National Stadium post Games use taken into consideration

grid-like steel structures as we intend to attract the spectators' attention to the athletes' performances. The bowl-shaped stands we designed bring together all the spectators to surround the athletes or artists," said Li Xinggang, deputy chief architect of the China Architecture Design and Research Group. "Contrary to what many assumed, we put the design of the project's interior first, focusing on the spectator stands, the core part of any sport facility."

The National Stadium will be used for opening and closing ceremonies, track and field events, and

football finals during the Olympics and after 2008 it will be served as a venue for large-scale sports competitions, conventional competitions as well as business and cultural activities.

Despite zigzags in the design process, the principal concepts remain unchanged, according to Li. "We optimized the design by omitting the originally designed retractable roof and enlarging the size of the rooftop opening, resulting in less steel use, but the bird's nest is still the bird's nest."

Soundproofing in the National Stadium is eco-friendly as well.

Both the National Stadium and the National Aquatics Center will feature membrane structures, but the National Stadium will have two membranes – a transparent snow and rain-proof ETFE membrane on the upper levels of the stadium's steel structure and a cream-colored PTFE membrane hung from the steel structure to ensure sound insulation inside the stadium.

A total of 110,000 square meters of ETFE and PTFE membrane will be installed at the National Stadium, surpassing the membrane coverage area of the water cube.



## The National Aquatics Center a reflection of the green Olympic spirit

By Chu Meng

The National Aquatics Center is a miracle that lies on the central axis of Beijing. Construction of the "water cube" began in 2003, and the membrane structure of the venue's exterior and its main indoor competition room was completely installed by March 2007.

The total surface area of the National Aquatics Center covers 80,000 square meters. During the Olympic Games, the venue will host the swimming, diving, and synchronized

swimming events, with 42 gold medals to be awarded here. It has an indoor seating capacity of 17,000 seats.

The "water cube" now has a protective "overcoat" composed of a high-tech eco-friendly membrane structure. The venue also contains a range of other high-tech features including the steel structure, indoor environmental systems and ethylene-tetra-fluoro-ethylene or ETFE membrane installations, which embody the concept of a "high-tech and Green Olympics."

In contrast to the outdoor swimming pools used to host the swimming events of past Olympic Games, the National Aquatics Center uses a completely enclosed design. However, the ETFE outer membrane structure will allow 90 percent of sunlight into the venue, so that natural light will be available inside for up to nine hours a day, which helps to save electricity.

The venue's ETFE membrane is extremely sturdy and elastic. It also has a very high melting point

surpassing 715 degrees to ensure protection from fire hazards.

The "water cube" is a completely enclosed venue, but potential problems with ventilation and acoustic problems have been addressed. An exhaust fan built into the rooftop, along with eight natural vents, work to ventilate the venue. The structure's

interior also employs a series of special materials to ensure perfect acoustics.

Post-Games, the venue will be converted into a comprehensive, first-class aquatics recreation center.

CFP Photos

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## New AC fired up at badminton and gymnastics venue



By Chu Meng

The Beijing University of Technology Gymnasium – venue for the badminton and artistic gymnastics competitions at the Games is ready to go. It has an all new air conditioning system that is low on energy consumption and exhaust gas emissions.

The requirements for the air conditioning system at this Olympic venue are very strict. Too much air and a shuttlecock's flight or the artistry of a gymnast's ribbon movement could be affected.

In addition to being an Olympic venue in 2008, the University venue will host the Good Luck Beijing 2007 Artistic Gymnastics International Invitational Tournament later this year.

The South China University of Technology – responsible for making modifications to the air conditioning system – was under draconian guidelines that stipulated ripping out sections of the building to put in a new air conditioning unit or altering the power of the current system would not be an option.

Instead, changes could only be made to the air-conditioning vents. Experts at the South China University of Technology suggested using a method of "breaking down the whole into parts."

They would install three vents underneath every other seatback, for a total of 9,300 new air conditioning vents in the spectator seating area. These small vents would maintain the room temperature at 20 degrees celsius even with the loss of cool air as spectators entered the gymnasium.

The challenge was not in bringing the room temperature down but rather keeping it stable. Another challenge presented itself. How do you keep the venue temperature from rising when 7,000 people enter and leave the gymnasium at any given moment?

A clever design addition was the answer. The gymnasium entrance will be fitted with a double-layer door with a gap of over one meter between the layers. The double layers will keep the air inside the gymnasium separate from the air outside. Not even a draft of air will be allowed in or out of the venue, thereby ensuring the stability of the venue's room temperature.

## Natural lighting features at the 'green venue'

By Chu Meng

With the 2008 Olympic Games less than one year away, the China Agricultural University (CAU) Gymnasium was delivered to the wrestling international governing body (FILA) at a symbolic hand-over ceremony prior to the Good Luck Beijing test event.

Located on the eastern campus of CAU, the Olympic wrestling venue is so far the first completed venue that is based on a school campus. The complex and can seat up to 8,500 people.

Upon entering the gym, one can see that panes of glass separating the roof's steps which can be automatically adjusted to allow for ventilation or to add more natural lighting. The skylights provide enough lighting for daytime activities even in cloudy weather. The environment-friendly design will benefit the university in areas of cost and energy saving.

Inside the venue will be three mats for Olympic wrestling competitions. An auxiliary training lobby will also be available for the athletes during the Games.

After the Games, the lobby will return to its original function as a indoor swimming pool. During the construction, the pool was back-filled with sand and will serve as an auxiliary lobby at the Games.

In 2002, geothermal water was discovered in the university area and was measured to be tested at 49 degrees celsius. The Olympic wrestling athletes and swimmers can use the water to take a bath, as the university teachers and students do.

In addition, the gym will facilitate both the university and the community. After the Games, the venue will serve as a multi-functional facility fully accessible to the university students and staff.



CFP Photos

## Natural circulation cools Olympic Green Tennis Center

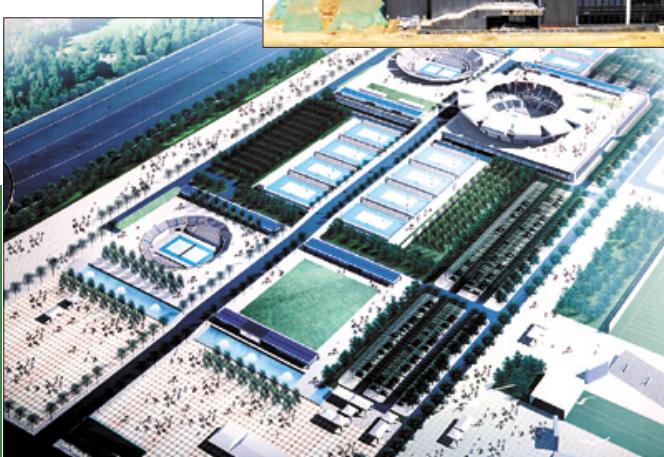
By Chu Meng

On the morning of March 23 construction started on the Tennis Center, a venue of the 2008 Olympic Games. Of the three competition venues situated in the Olympic Green Park, only the Tennis Center has undergone changes necessary to transform it from a temporary venue to a permanent one.

After the Olympic Games, the Olympic Green Tennis Center will

serve as a national training base for Chinese tennis players and offer Beijing residents a place to play tennis.

Located in the southern end of the Olympic Green Park, the Tennis Center will host the Beijing 2008 Olympic and Paralympic tennis competitions, featuring ten competition courts and six practice courts. The three main competition courts feature a 12-sided shape offering 12 viewing angles.



"The cement exterior wall of the Tennis Center will remain unpainted to show off the natural gray color of the concrete, which will beautifully complement the colors of the finished Olympic Green Park," Sun Yangchao, who is in charge of the Tennis Center's construction, said.

The Tennis Center will employ a new feature never before used in tennis courts anywhere in the world – a natural

ventilation and circulation system. During the Olympic Games, the average temperature of the tennis courts could climb as high as 50 degrees celsius.

Taking this into consideration, the 12 interior spectator stands have been designed with equipment to collect and treat natural wind. The treatment equipment will re-circulate the trapped wind through vents circling the competition courts and

effectively decrease the court-side temperatures by about three degrees.

The Tennis Center also features environmental conservation measures including a sewage treatment system that uses bio-film technology to effectively treat sewage. In addition, the Tennis Center manages to conserve energy and costs using solar energy with a geothermal heat pump system that uses solar energy to light the venue and provide heating and cooling.

The project embodies the concepts of the Green Olympics, Hi-Tech Olympics and People's Olympics. It integrates the design experiences of world sport architecture and will be a tennis competition venue with state of the art design yet keeping with international standards.



Local authorities try to soothe traffic trouble by halving the cars on the highway.

Beijing is gearing up efforts to build a green Olympic Games in 2008. In the six years since the success of the Olympic bid, the Beijing government has been battling to make some of that happen. They've torn up streets to build subway lines, upgraded sewage treatment plants. They've planted tens of millions of trees, pulverized a nearby mountain for fresh soil. The Green Olympics will come soon.

## Beijing's Green Olympic road

By Han Manman

Green symbolizes life and peace. As one of the three themes of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Green Olympics means to prepare for the Olympic Games while following sustainable development. Such development includes protection of environment, conservation of resources and maintenance of ecological balance. The city aims to enhance environmental infrastructure construction through hosting the Olympics, to improve ecological surroundings, to widely organize environmental communication and education activities to raise public awareness and to leave a

rich environmental-heritage for both China and the world.

Strictly adhering to the great idea of scientific development, the Beijing Municipal Government (BMG) and Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG) have made an effort to promote the city's environment.

The Chinese government has promised a green Olympics for 2008. Since winning the bid in 2001, Beijing has invested in green construction materials for the Olympic Village and made monumental efforts to clean up the city's air and water. International companies and bilat-



Authorities post the "Green Beijing" slogan to increase public awareness of environmental protection.

er aid projects are piloting environmentally-clean technologies in Beijing as part of the Green Olympics. Moreover, international and domestic environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are carrying out green projects linked to the Olympics.

The Beijing municipal government has pledged US\$13 billion for environmental cleanup and protection. In its application to host the Olympics, China outlined more than 50 measures to improve environmental conditions. Beijing officials have been moving rivers and mountains since then. Chunks of mountains in the northwest have been blown up and their soil was moved to grow trees and greenery elsewhere. A river from a neighboring province is being redirected into Beijing to supply extra water.



Gardeners fix Beijing's green lanes.

CFP Photos

## Olympic Games and Environment

The modern Olympics began in 1896, but environmental protection never entered public concern until the 1950s and 1960s. In 1972, the first United Nations Conference on Humanity and the Environment was held in Stockholm. With more progress made in the environmental field, people have come to notice the close link between the environment and sports.

**The 27th Olympics in Sydney in 2000:** Sydney is widely praised for putting forward the concept of "Green Olympics." The Sydney Olympic Stadium covers an area of over 200 hectares, 40 of which were once polluted by industrial and domestic waste. A special path was built for the wild frogs when constructing the Olympic road. Photovoltaic technology was used to provide lighting for some venues, and environmentally-friendly materials were used to build the Olympic facilities. Targets were set for classifying and recycling solid waste and using recycled paper.

**The 23rd Olympics in Los Angeles:** the Games organizers made special arrangements in the competition schedule and routes to reduce vehicle pollution. **The 24th Olympics in Seoul:** energy structures were adjusted to control the pollution caused by coal-burning. A large-scale project was conducted to treat water from the Hanjiang River. Other measures were also taken during the Games, such as temporarily closing some industries. Coal burning was reduced by two-thirds after the Games.

**The 17th Winter Olympics in Lillehammer 1994:** hailed as the first Green Winter Olympics. A lot of work was done to protect the vegetation and wildlife, to prevent vehicle pollution and recycle waste.

**The 26th Olympics in Atlanta in 1996:** aside from its use of a forecasting and reporting system, the city reduced use of private cars and transported the spectators by public

bus. These measures were very effective in ensuring quality air.

**The 27th Olympics in Sydney in 2000:** Sydney is widely praised for putting forward the concept of "Green Olympics." The Sydney Olympic Stadium covers an area of over 200 hectares, 40 of which were once polluted by industrial and domestic waste. A special path was built for the wild frogs when constructing the Olympic road. Photovoltaic technology was used to provide lighting for some venues, and environmentally-friendly materials were used to build the Olympic facilities. Targets were set for classifying and recycling solid waste and using recycled paper.

In the past 20 years, host cities have learned more and more about the importance of the environment in the Olympic Games. Through great efforts, Olympic cities have created a good environment for the Games and set a good example for Beijing.

The environmental quality of air, water and soil affects the competition, and the Games themselves may have a negative impact on environment. Preparing for the Games is a good opportunity for the city to use the popularity of sports to enhance environmental protection and improve the capital's sustainable development.

(By Han Manman)

# Fulfilling the green promise



Capital Iron and Steel, one of Beijing's largest polluters, was moved out of the capital last year.

## Air pollution

Concerns over air pollution have never been so high in any previous Summer Games. Beijing's bad air – and the rest of what the International Olympic Committee termed the city's "environmental challenge" – was one issue raised when the city first made its Olympic bid in 2000. Beijing's annual average density of soot particles from car exhaust is six times higher than Tokyo.

The government is trying to do more than just create clear skies – it is also working to produce clean air.

Air pollution was greatly reduced during the first few years of Beijing's cleanup campaign, and by 2002, the number of "blue sky days" doubled to almost 200. Now, levels of ozone and other pollutants meet international norms.

Capital Iron and Steel, one of Beijing's largest polluters, was moved out of the capital last year. "Capital Iron and Steel annually discharged 18,000 tons of solid particulate matter, accounting for more than 40 percent of that discharged by the whole industrial sector of the city," Cai Hefu, a researcher from the China Environmental Science Research Institute, said at a forum on the relocation of the steel giant.

## Traffic problem

To experiment in a drive to check pollution and ease the city's traffic, the Beijing government launched trial "No Car Day" and "Odd-Even Number Days" campaigns last month.

Last month, the city participated in a nation-wide campaign to reduce exhaust emissions and prohibited private cars from operating in certain areas of the city. In special areas of Beijing from Tianqiao to Zhushikou and Wangfujing to Bamiancao, only pedestrians, bicycles, taxis and buses are allowed on the road from 7am to 7pm.

The experiment also banned cars from driving on the capital's roads in an odd-even number plate system. As a part of the plan, all private vehicles with license plates ending in even numbers were pulled from the roads on August 17 and August 19. Odd-plated vehicles were pulled on August 18 and August 20. The idea was to keep 1.3 million cars off the roads, a third of the city's car population. Beijing is home to three million cars with another 1,000 hitting its roads every day.

Another 2,580 old buses and 5,000 taxis and other high-polluters will be taken off the roads, the Beijing Environmental Protection Bureau said. In 2006, 15,000 polluting taxis and 3,000 buses

By Han Manman

Aside from fulfilling its promise to create a Green Olympics, the government is working on a new master plan: to make Beijing "a city suitable for living."



were eliminated, while 4,000 natural gas driven buses were put into operation.

## Preventing rainfall

Preparing for the Beijing Olympics has drawn attention to technology capable of preventing rainfall.

At the July 31 Beijing Meteorological Bureau news conference, Zhang Qiang, deputy director of the Beijing Weather Modification Office, said China had succeeded in experiments to prevent rainfall and clouds.

"Only Russia has succeeded in reducing rainfall. So, we have to continue the experiment over a long period," she said.

Zhang and others are working on a grand experiment to hold the opening and closing ceremonies of the Summer Games under clear skies next year.

Shells loaded with certain chemicals are shot into the sky from an area near the Olympic stadium to produce rain in advance or extinguish rain clouds.

This is an application of the technology to produce rainfall in times of a water shortage. China is trying to bring nature under control to make the Olympic Games a success.

## Saving energy

Beijing has initiated a number of projects using solar energy and recycled water for the 2008 Olympic Games.

A solar power grid, funded partly by Italy, is currently under construction. It will provide hot water for 16,000 athletes and save 2,000 tons of coal per year.

Other projects include a heating and cooling project for a 410,000-square meter building that uses recycled water. It is the largest of its kind in China and is expected to save another 6,000 tons of coal a year.

Three hundred low-emission engines have already been installed in

## Glossary

限期治理 undertake treatment within a prescribed limit of time

生态示范区 eco-demonstration region; environmentally-friendly region

国家级园林城市 Nationally-Designated Garden City

工业固体废物 solid industrial waste

白色污染 white pollution (by using and littering of non-degradable white plastics)

可降解一次性塑料袋 disposable bio-degradable plastic bags

放射性废料积存 accumulation of radioactive waste

有机污染物 organic pollutants

三废综合利用 multipurpose use of three types of wastes (waste water, gas, solid waste)

城市垃圾无害化处理率 decontamination rate of urban refuse

垃圾填埋场 refuse landfill

垃圾焚化厂 refuse incinerator

防止过度利用森林 protect forests from overexploitation

森林砍伐率 deforestation rate

水土流失 water and soil erosion

土壤盐碱化 soil alkalinization

生态农业 environmentally-friendly agriculture; eco-agriculture

水资源保护区 water resource conservation zone

海水淡化 sea water desalination

造林工程 forestation project

绿化面积 forested areas; greening space

森林覆盖率 forest coverage

防风林 wind breaker

防沙林 sand breaker

速生林 fast-growing trees

降低资源消耗率 slow down the rate of resource degradation

开发可再生资源 develop renewable resources

环保产品 environmentally-friendly products

自然保护区 nature reserve

野生动植物 wild fauna and flora

保护生存环境 conserve natural habitats

濒危野生动物 endangered wildlife

珍稀濒危物种繁育基地 rare and endangered species breeding center

Three hundred low-emission engines are installed in Beijing buses.

CFP Photos

Beijing buses. Shi Hanmin, director of the Beijing environmental protection bureau, said the 2008 Olympic Games provides both environmental challenges and opportunities, adding that international cooperation is required to make the event a success.

Authorities also established an organization staffed with "energy-saving police," who patrol commercial buildings and hotels to ensure air conditioners installed in those facilities are set no lower than 26 degrees Celsius. The police will order the operators of those facilities to raise the thermostat if the thermometer reads lower.

## Smoke-Free Olympics

Starting October 1 this year, a smoking ban will be in effect in Beijing's 66,000 taxis to help create "smoke free" Games in 2008. Drivers caught smoking inside taxis will be fined up to 200 yuan, or about US\$27.

"Beijing started a drive to ban smoking in hospitals, schools, restaurants, government offices and private organizations last April," Jin Dapeng, head of the Beijing Municipal Health Bureau, said.

The municipal government has also drafted a set of regulations banning smoking at Olympic venues, athletes' accommodations and within vehicles designated to serve the event.

Sales of cigarettes would also be banned in all venues, training and accommodation areas.

Despite a vow to organize a "smoke free" Olympic Games, health officials admitted that changing the habits of 350 million smokers would be difficult. The government will still enforce a ban on smoking in public places.

# Trekking in the capi

By Jiang Xubo

Inhaling a breath of fresh air in the capital's green outskirts and not adding to air pollution with your car on your way seems to be mission impossible nowadays. You may wonder if there is any possible way to



Enjoy homemade meal in a courtyard house.

IC Photo

Cuandixia Village – Lingshan Mountain – Longmenjian Gorge

#### Hike description

The hike starts with a stay at a beautiful village, Cuandixia in Zhaitang Town, Mentougou District, which made the heritage list issued by the National Cultural and Relics Bureau. Most houses in the village can be traced back to the Ming and Qing Dynasties which makes the village a living museum of Chinese village housing. In addition to the vernacular architecture you can also note faded slogans from the Cultural Revolution on the walls when you take a walk through the narrow lanes.

As well as touring around the centuries-old village, you can enjoy a trek to nearby Lingshan Mountain, which

cut emissions while enjoying wonder

Maybe it is impossible to avoid taking public transportation as much as outskirts of Beijing. You can go ever

## Ming Dynasty v

is over 2,300 meters high and ranks as the highest in Beijing's outskirts.

Keener hikers can even find their way to the Longmenjian, an impressive gorge with many springs joining a clear stream that feeds pools and waterfalls and runs alongside sheer cliffs, caves and interesting rock formations.

#### Highlights

Originally called Cuandixia (Under the Stove), this tiny village of around a hundred people is an ideal two-day trip for those with a passion for Chinese vernacular architecture or keen for a glimpse of life in rural China. Staying overnight in one of the century-old courtyard houses in the village surely offers you a slice of tranquil countryside

## Plateau camp at Hu

Baiyucun Village – Huangcaoliang Ridge – Qizulou Great wall – Lingshan Mountain

#### Hike description

This hiking route starts with Baiyucun Village, some 15 kilometers north of Zhaitang Town, Mentougou District, which was the gate on one of the most important routes to the west capital before railway transport was available.

Following the path in the mountains and going through the valley, which is covered with snow in all seasons but summer, you get a broad plateau and a beautiful view of the Lingshan Mountain and seven watch towers of the

Huangcaoliang Great Wall.

Follow the path to one of the towers with a broad and level ground which makes an ideal choice for camping.

#### Highlights

Huangcaoliang Ridge, which is situated in Zhaitang Town, Mentougou District, rises 1,737 meters into the sky. Climbing the mountain is not an easy job yet once atop the mountain you will find yourself at a broad meadow which extends for miles and is magnificent in fall with rich golden grass waving and shining in the wind.

The Great Wall nearby, the Qizulou section, was built as



Hiking in cool, early autumn air.

## One-day cycling to

Jianxiangqiao Bridge – Changping Roundabout – Juyongguan Great Wall – Badaling Great Wall – Nankou Roundabout – Yangfang – the Summer Palace, Haidian District

#### Tour description

Cooler fall weather provides perfect conditions for a

cycling tour around the capital. There are plenty of single-track lanes on the city's outskirts for you to take your two-wheeler. Even the mountains which are, after all, what your mountain bike was built for. For a leisurely holiday, you don't have to strain yourself too much so a gentle one-day cycling tour of Beijing's outskirts could be just

what the doctor ordered.

Your tour starts at Jianxiangqiao Bridge on the north Fourth Ring Road, where you can go on the Badaling Highway cycling north. You will arrive at Changping District.

Head on, you will arrive at the Juyongguan Great



# tal's green outskirts

erful trips.

cars completely, but at least you can as possible when you plan trips to the further and turn to your feet to take

you on a hiking or cycling tour.

So don't hesitate – pack up and leave behind all the concrete and steel, traffic and mad crowds, and rush to the capital's countryside for a green view, fresh air and exploration in the cool air of the early fall.

## village overnight

life without the chaos of karaoke parlors, bars and blaring car horns.

### A recommended itinerary

#### The first day:

9am – The village is about three hours drive away from the city center so you'd better start off several hours before lunch.

noon – You can arrive at the village, check in and enjoy a homemade countryside lunch in the courtyard.

1:30pm-6pm – Lunch and walking around the village, tracing century-old trails, usually turns to be a pleasant experience.

#### The second day:

7:30am – Start off your hike for the Lingshan Moun-

tain.

11:30pm – Lunch. (Don't forget to bring some snacks.)

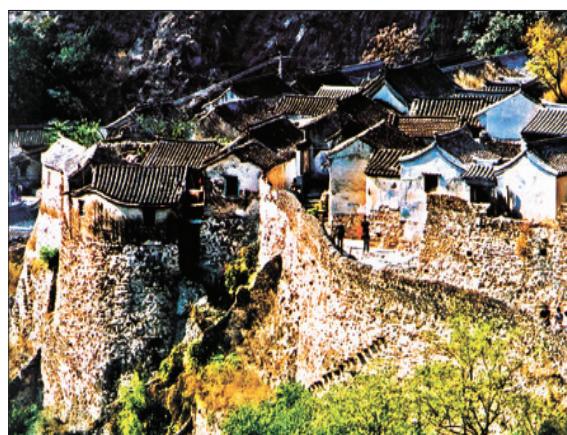
3pm – Arrive at Longmenjian which marks the end of your hike.

3:30pm – Late lunch at one of the nice Chinese restaurants near the gorge.

6:30pm – Time to head home.

### Accommodation

You can book a courtyard house in the village. Bedding will be provided and some offer taps and bowls for washing. Walking in the ancient village is of course attractive but don't forget to come back in time for dinner and, if you're lucky enough, you could enjoy a bonfire party.



The Ming Dynasty village

## uangcaoliang Ridge



many as 400 years ago. The Wall snakes into the mountain and extends many kilometers with seven watchtowers standing on mountain peaks. It is a kind of miracle that the watchtowers have survived the buffeting rain and wind of centuries. You can't help feeling a sense of history when you rest your eyes on the Great Wall, which lies still in the sunset.

If you have time, you can still enjoy a trip to Lingshan Mountain nearby, which stands as the highest mountain around the capital.

### A recommended itinerary

#### The first day:

7am – Start out for the tour.

9:30am – Arrive at the Baiyucun Village which is the starting point of the hike to the ridge.

11:30am – You will be atop the Huangcaoliang Ridge and enjoy the view of the plateau, if everything goes well.

4pm – Descend the mountain and arrive at Duanmugou Ditch, where you can camp for the night.

#### The second day:

8am – Get up for breakfast and pack up.

10am – Walk through the valley at the left side of the Duanmugou Ditch and head for the Lingshan Mountain.

3pm – Arrive at the parking lot on Lingshan for lunch.

5:00pm – Head home in the downtown of Beijing.

## ur to the Great Wall

Wall, which is located some 50 kilometers northwest of the capital's downtown area. Keen hikers can park their bikes and continue their tour to the Great Wall, but keep in mind that you have to walk some 1,230 steps before you reach the top of mountain, which is 830 meters above the sea level.

After lunch, you can continue your cycling tour on the highway to the Badaling section of the Great Wall.

Get off the highway at Nankou Town in Changping District and head south to Yangfang Town where you can

go on Wenquan Road, which will lead you south to the Summer Palace.

### Highlights

The Juyongguan and Badaling sections of the Great Wall are no doubt the major attractions on your way. There is also one other place you should not miss – the Tank Museum in Yangfang Town, Changping District. The museum, which was set up in 1998, stands as the country's only one museum featuring tanks and replicating weapons. You can enjoy a tank display and perfor-

mance if you are lucky enough and even have a try driving a tank yourself.

### A recommended itinerary

8am – Start cycling at Jianxiangqiao Bridge.

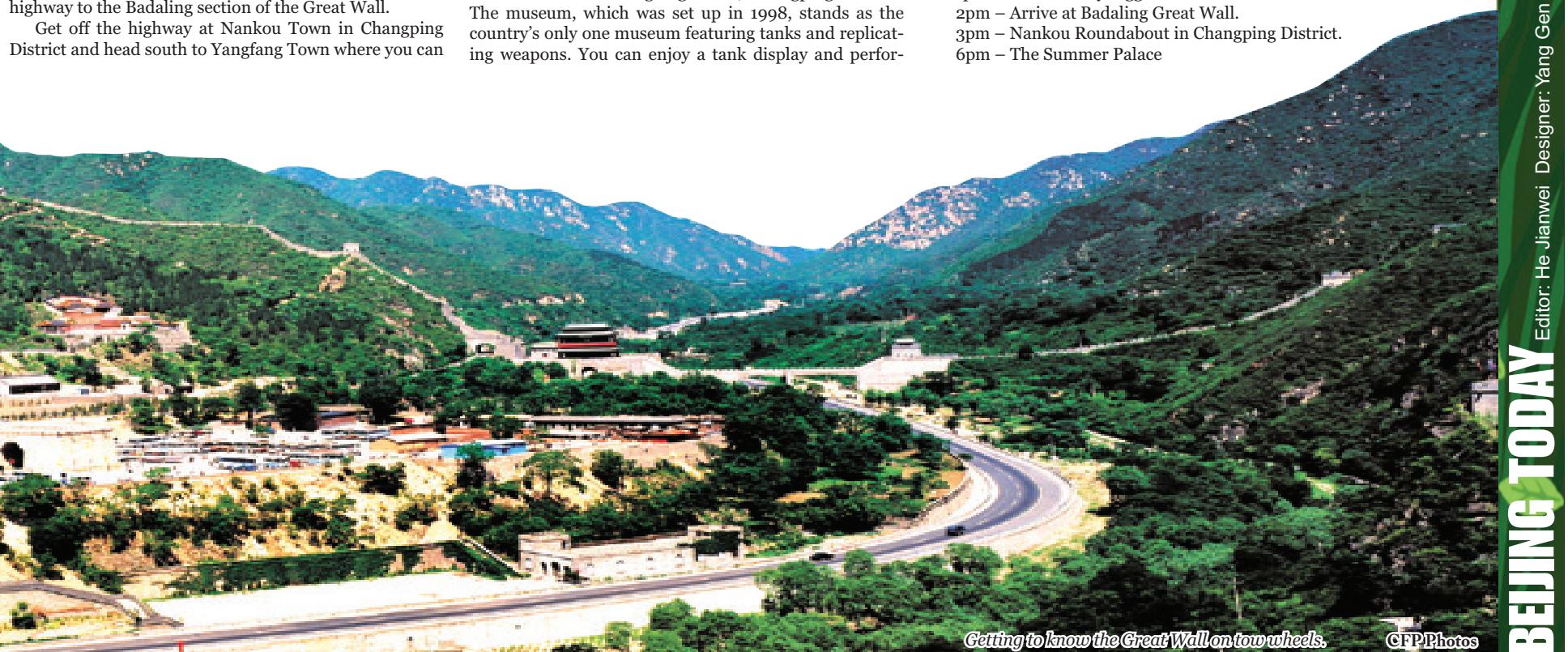
11am – Arrive at Changping District, where you can have a meal.

1pm – Arrive at Juyongguan Great Wall.

2pm – Arrive at Badaling Great Wall.

3pm – Nankou Roundabout in Changping District.

6pm – The Summer Palace



Getting to know the Great Wall on tow wheels.

CFP Photos

A group of people is trying to make their lives simple and eco-friendly. Some of them have given up urban life to create a natural garden, planting vegetables; some live on mountains to plant trees despite the hard and lonely life; some design natural and eco-friendly house. Anyway, they deserve appreciation for trying their best to let people know about the importance and interests of a healthy, green life.

## Ladies create a garden of their own

By Jackie Zhang

Two years ago, five dissatisfied workers decided to gather and create a new rural lifestyle for they pursued a happiness they could not get in the city.

Lin Zhiping, Qiu Weili, Xia Yanfei, Zhang Yingbei and Zhang Fumei have tested various parts of China in their quest for a bucolic existence. They build wooden houses, reclaim wasteland, plant vegetables, provide tourist services and teach local children for free.

Now, the five women are in a remote village in Chongqing. They say they will live there for ten years and turn it into a more beautiful area. The women dream of creating an ideal place in which people are without desire, no money is needed and residents can be given things according to their needs. They also hope to promote their lifestyle in other villages and help more people understand environmental protection.

The five women gathered for various reasons: pressures of work, failed marriage, weariness with urban life

and depression from arduous study. In 2005 they started their rural life in a remote village in Chongqing first. Without water, electricity, telephone or the Internet, they had to walk for two hours to reach the nearest town. They downloaded information on planting, asked for advice from local villagers and started to learn how to use hoes and other simple tools. After months of effort, however, they gradually mastered basic techniques to manage village life.

Ten years may seem like a long time



One of the ladies takes care of her field.

to be away from the excitement of the city, but these women have an admirable determination to their new mission of finding another way to live.

## Planting trees while I am alive



Yuan's sons often go to plant trees with him.

By Jackie Zhang

Yuan Keliang, 82, has lived on Muyun Mountain in the outskirts of Taiyuan, capital city of Shanxi Province, for 33 years. The mountains have become a deeper shade of green in recent years, and many different types of trees and fruit trees now grow there.

Yuan first came to Muyun Mountain in 1974 as the team leader of a group from a hardware company who wanted to plant trees there. The mountain was barren, and no water to be found. While others left the mountain for their different reasons, Yuan decided to stay.

Yuan dug a cave house halfway up the mountain and lived there. There was no water on the mountain so he collected rainwater in containers. There was no road on the mountain so he built one by moving rocks and filling soil.

The biggest difficulty with Yuan's plan to plant trees was the lack of water on the mountain. His solution was to take water from the towns at the foot of the mountain. Later, his children built six pools for collecting rain water in front of and behind the mountain.

Yuan's family supported him in his 33-year plan. His three sons have contributed as many as 500,000 yuan to tree-planting. His granddaughter gave her 5,500 yuan savings to Yuan saying the money was for buying new seedlings.

Yuan has planted about 150,000 trees of 50 types. Now, 80 percent of the mountain is covered in growth. He said that he would plant 20,000 pear, persimmon and black date trees whilst he is still alive, turning Muyun Mountain into a modern pastoral area.

"While I am alive, I'll plant trees, and when I die, I will be buried here looking at the mountain."

## Lead a clean and simple life

By Jackie Zhang

Set in an orchard of persimmon trees, a sprawling, mansion called Villa Shizilin brings together two different approaches to architecture in a rapidly-changing world. Fusing modern technology with an interpretation of traditional forms, the project finds common ground between a global world view and an appreciation of local crafts, materials, and culture. Wang Hui, the designer of the villa, now lives there, pursuing a clean and natural simple life.

Villa Shizilin was constructed by changing spaces. Every window in

the house is a viewfinder. People can look at the mountains outside in a different light through different windows.

The house is a realization of a kind of easy life. It is different from any working places. Without noise, it seems that time goes by slowly.

"Every house I design should have some special places to embody my originality, both in design method and skills," Wang said.

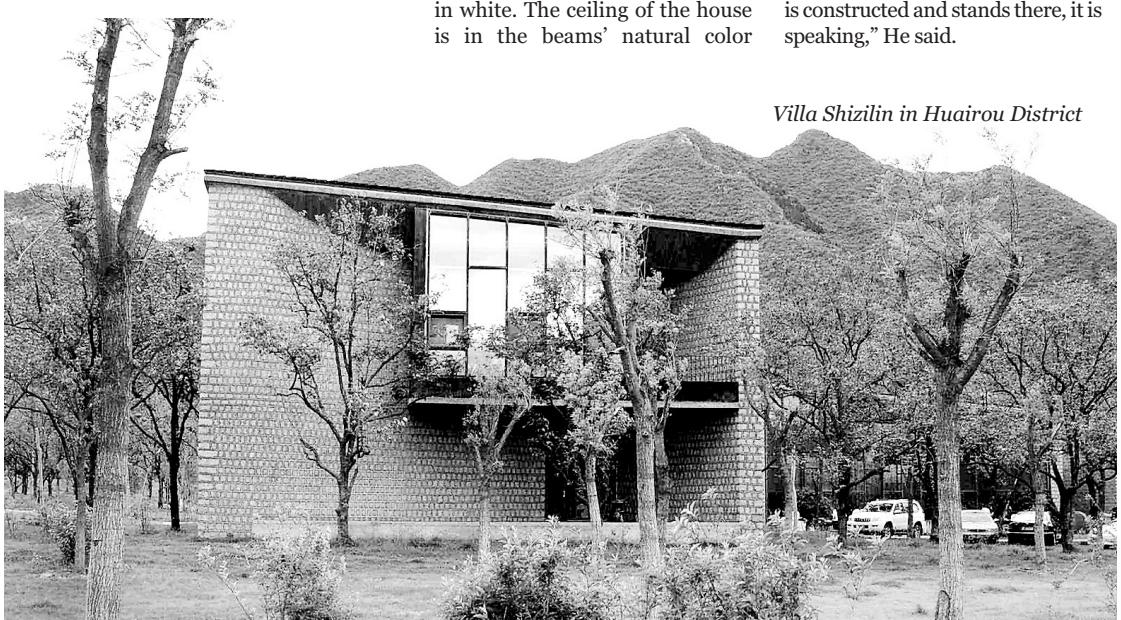
MIMA (Zuoyoujian Coffee) near the Summer Palace is another work of Wang.

The interior of the cafe is all in white. The ceiling of the house is in the beams' natural color

and Wang thinks that the materials make the structure more real. The bar counter is made of sticks which resemble books. Varieties of books of different languages are piled up on the counter. Small triangular glass tables are displayed in the shop, which make the room appear more simple and natural.

Wang says he thinks there are two kinds of ideal living conditions – the urban and the rural. He said, urban living should reduce living costs to the greatest extend possible and rural living should be in a clean and simple house. "When the house is constructed and stands there, it is speaking," He said.

Villa Shizilin in Huairou District



Teachers and students in Beijing schools understand the importance of environmental protection. They have gradually sensed the climate change and felt global warming, and are doing all they can to search for solutions. They may not be able to solve everything on their own, but their work may inspire readers to do their own part.

## If they're listening, then you're winning

By Jackie Zhang

Some people plug their ears and refuse to listen. Some people laugh and tell him to give up. Some tell him climate change is just another political issue.

Still, Jin Yunan, a middle school student at Beijing No 8 Middle School, continues to bombard people with facts and evidence from daily life.

Slowly but surely, people have started to listen.

Jin visited London last year as the ambassador to the British Council's Climate Cool Program to learn how the city is handling environmental protection. When he returned, he began researching what he could do here.

"The moment we got off our plane and walked into Heathrow, we knew we were in a country that took climate change very seriously; we saw huge advertisements promoting the use of non-carbon fuels by giving exact facts on how greenhouse gas emissions were contributing to climate change," Jin said, describing his trip to London. "That was the first lesson: before asking the public to do anything about this issue, you must familiarize them with the topic."

Back in Beijing, Jin began presenting slideshows with his classmates, and then invited Lu Xuedu, section chief of the Ministry of Science and Technology's Department of Social Development, to lecture at the school. He arranged for a public screening of *An Inconvenient Truth*, a movie by Davis Guggenheim about global warming, and a climate change billboard event. "The teachers were very skeptical. At that time, they weren't familiar with what I was trying to do, but after I took time to explain these activities, the school was very supportive," Jin said.

In his school, few environmental activities were organized. The school does encourage easy, effective ways to care for the environment by recycling bottles, batteries, used books and test preparation materials.

At present, the international community and China are very concerned about climate change. There is no doubt climate change is the challenge of the century. Jin believes that there are two ways to solve the problem: information and technology.

There are still many people oblivious to the threat: some people ignore it on purpose, he said. "In order to undo what we've done to our environment, we need as much support we can get. Abandoning skeptics and people who refuse to listen isn't a good idea. Mahatma Ghandi said that first they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win," Jin said.

"What we need now is attention, that's why we need all the publicity we can get. Next what we need is technology," Jin said.

## Keep it cool in School

By Jackie Zhang

Beijing No 8 Middle School is the base for technology education in Beijing. It ranks consistently among the capital's top schools for providing education about environmental protection.

This year, some students from the school participated in the Climate Cool Program held by British Council, where they did environmental research.

"The school stresses cultivating students comprehensively in the past," Wang Hong, the teacher responsible for the students' envi-

ronmental research in the school, said. "Three years ago, the teacher responsible for extracurricular activities took an interest in environmental protection. Environmental pollution threatens life," Wang said.

Although the things the school has done to educate the next generation are not so influential, even a little influence goes a long way.

When the 2007 Nobel Laureates Forum was held in Beijing this month, two prize winners visited the No 8 Middle School for a forum with students. More and more stu-

dents are participating in environmental protection activities in the school. The school supports them with equipment and funds.

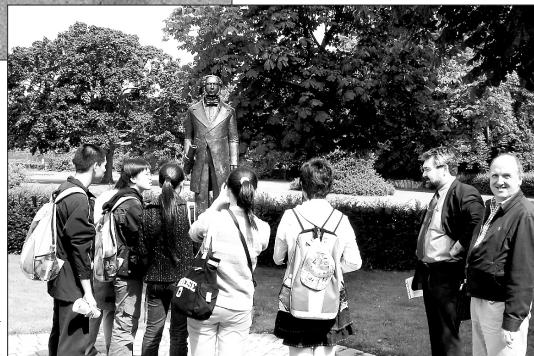
Students participating in the British Council's Climate Cool Program are divided into three teams. Each team selects a topic to research on its own. "Students will discuss their research with teachers and seek guidance," Wang Hong said.

These activities have helped students form objective, scientific views, and have made them aware of environment changes occurring around them.



Jin Yunan

Photos provided by  
Jin Yunan and Wu Di



Wu Di and Cheng Dairong's team experiments at school.

## Lifelong environmental protectors

By Jackie Zhang

Wu Di and Cheng Dairong are students from Beijing No 8 Middle School. They are members of an environmental research team, and Wu Di is this year's ambassador to the British Council's Climate Cool Program. Together, they have researched architectural material and structural influence on air temperature. The research has changed their view of the environment.

"My school is located in the financial zone in Beijing, where it is surrounded by high buildings and skyscrapers. We want to learn how these buildings affect us," Wu said. "We have finished our experiments and are preparing some questionnaires and interviews. We don't want to just solve the problem with our research or experiment – we want to inform people of the seriousness of the problem and promote eco-friendliness."

Before choosing the topic, the team checked many files on global warming. "Carbon is the main cause of global warming, but this is something already thoroughly investigated. In the end, we opted to research architecture instead," Cheng said. She said they wanted to view the problem from a different aspect.

The work is clearly divided. Some students are responsible for looking for different types of materials, some prepare experiments, some interview people on the street and some prepare questionnaires. "Different colors of ceramic tiles react differently to the same amount of heat. Black ones' temperatures rise more while blue ones' experience almost no change," Cheng said.

She said the team members' environmental views changed totally through research. "We listened to speeches in universities, the Central Weather Bureau and talked with British friends. Environmental protection should be everyone's responsibility."

"I think the situation is urgent. We should do something now to stop polluting the air," Wu said. "All the professors in London said we should do something now. Maybe the individual cannot change anything, but if everybody tries his best, we will see immediate effect."

Wu said China was a focus in the discussion sessions. "Professors mentioned China many times while giving lectures. I heard voices on both sides say what we do well and what we do badly. Most people said we used too many resources and that our environmental pollution is serious. The government has started to take action, but we have a long way to go."

Wu said he is preparing for a lecture about global warming. "I want to gradually influence students in my school. Let them be aware of the problems, and then, we'll try to find out ways to solve them."

# Eco-friendly lesson number one

By Gan Tian

In our international community, everyone from Fortune 500 CEOs to the global village idiot must learn how to take responsibility for the protection of our shared environment. *Beijing Today* now gives you the opportunity to learn about four important categories of living: clothes, food, living space and transportation.

We are not plastic bags

By Gan Tian

For most people, environmental protection is not the first thing they consider when buying clothes. The price, practicality and an alluring brand name is what they look for, and they don't consider means of production. However, the fashion industry has always had a big environmental impact.

Anya Hindmarch designed "I'm not a Plastic Bag," which spread from the US to Europe and South Africa. Though she cancelled the launches at Anya Hindmarch Beijing and On Pedder Shanghai, Chinese eco-ladies are still crazy about this popular bag.

"The bag project started two years ago when a man called David Robinson approached me," she said.

"David, a very good man, runs a global social change network called We Are What We Do. It is a fantastic movement which tries to inspire people to use their everyday actions to change the world. He is very much of the belief that if everyone makes a small change and does their bit it can actually amount to making a big difference. I just love the simplicity of that, and I agree with it," the designer said to readers of *Bag Snob* magazine.

"There's a lot to be said for plastic, for sure, but on a recent shopping trip, I refused nine plastic bags as I could put things directly into my cotton one – and that's amazing. If it makes people rethink their behavior, and perhaps makes the supermarkets



T-shirt and Jeans of Backstage9

Photo provided by Teddy Mui



rethink their solutions, then it's achieved something as far as I'm concerned," she said.

Don't think that this fashion appears only in Western countries. Teddy Mui started fashion brand Backstage9 in February this year. Now he has an autumn collection available to customers. The brand's clothes all come in recyclable bag made from photographic paper.

Backstage9's street style T-shirts use eco-friendly fibers such as organic cotton. Some clothing execs are hoping eco-apparel will go the way of organic food and beauty prod-

ucts, which have become a mainstream industry.

Mui said production of clothing fibers can be highly damaging to the environment, with cotton being one of the worst. The Sustainable Cotton Project, based in the US, said the making of a simple T-shirt may use up a third of a pound of agricultural chemicals. That's inspiring to many vendors like Teddy, who have started to think about using organic cotton.

"I just want to let everybody know that eco-friendly behavior is like a backstage hand – reliable and not showing-off," he said.

You can find Backstage9 in No 2020, Floor 2 of 3.3 Shopping Mall at Sanlitun, B3-A10 at 77 Street in Xidan, and QD39 at Longfusi Temple Shopping Area.

Living in a dreaming house

By Gan Tian

Search on 43things.com and you will discover that there are 81 people who want to build an eco-friendly house, but only four people who have succeeded in doing so. In Western countries, it is hard to find a suitable site for construction and the huge amount of spare time needed. This is no less true in Beijing. To imagine building your own house, however, will surely get the pulse racing.

A netizen "Home Style Mama" shared her dreams of her eco-friendly house.

"I envision homes of the future having to use other resources other than natural gas and coal. I see my home as being close to a waterfall, and using the water's movement to generate power for the fridge, microwave, TV and washing machine," she wrote.

"I see my home having loads of candles and oil lamps, rather than light bulbs. Skylights will be spread throughout. There will be a greenhouse on the property, a reasonably small one. That will be where the food comes from. I will fasten plastic tubing to the framework of the greenhouse which will have misting holes throughout. To water the plants, I will simply fill a barrel full of water and use a hand pump to push the water through the piping. We will have an outhouse and collect the waste to use as fertilizer.

"We will bathe in the waterfall and wash our hands in the stream. We will eat various animal inhabitants of our land, especially fish and any livestock we raise. We will sell alpaca fur to pay the mortgage, the medical bills, property taxes and the biplane I keep hidden away.

"Soon, a small village will form, with enlightened people and a little one-room schoolhouse. It will come about at about the time the Earth's oil resources run out. There will be a few cars, but they will be run on hemp or corn oil and only be used by emergency personnel and the filthy rich.

"Soon, a city will come to be, with taxis honking and municipal codes will fill my mind with constant dread. But I won't care, because by then I will be an infamous urban legend, known only as 'the crazy old hag who started it all'. I will be so close to death that nothing will matter to me at all, and my home will be so rundown and full of old newspapers and cats that they'll have to take me to the old folks home where I will pretend to be a witch, casting make-believe curses."

Not everyone is so confident in their ability to build an ideal home. Netizen Hollybeth said, "I would really like to build an eco-friendly home, but the process seems daunting to someone like me with no knowledge of experience in the field. Any ideas or comments would be appreciated. I'm especially looking for cost-effective methods as our budget is sadly going to have to determine how 'green' we can be."

If you can't build an eco-friendly house from scratch then why not make your existing house as green as you can with small daily efforts?



An eco-friendly house built in New Zealand

...continued from page 12



Nowadays organic food is supposed to be healthier for the body, tastes and lasts better.

CFP Photo

## Organic food stimulates your stomach

By Gan Tian

Serving your guests well and finding a healthy approach to eating can be easier if you choose to put eco-friendly food on the table. For the most environmentally-friendly food, you should consider buying organic, avoid genetically modified ingredients and also take into account food miles: looking to buy locally-grown food.

Organic food is supposed to be healthier for the body, but, by virtue of being fresher, the food looks, tastes and lasts better than food procured by more conventional methods.

Just imagine you are a housewife. If your food looks and tastes better you'll have a reputation for serving fantastic food, – that's the wish of any desperate housewife. With the food lasting longer, you'll save money and won't have to reorder because you won't throw as much food away.

The China Environment and Sustainable Development Reference and Research Center (CESDRRC) has published a pamphlet Organic Trends: Organic Food Directory for China 2007, which tells consumers where to buy organic food in supermarkets, restaurants, home delivery services and farms in China.

They suggest that you can buy organic food in Xidan Wanfang Market, SOGO in Xuanwumen Wai Dajie, and all the Carrefour branches.

You can also try Lohaocity Supermarket, located at No 29 B4, Lucky Street, which provides fresh organic products from Zhiwei Farm, a domestic and international organic food supplier. Lohaocity Supermarket is very popular among foreigners, and they have branches in No 52, Jingshunlu, and 10A, Building 5, No 76, Nan'erlu, Baizhan (8459 4332).

## From your house to your office

By Gan Tian

John Zhou is an IT worker in Zhongguancun. He bought an apartment in Tongzhou District two years ago and drives to work every day.

John's work starts at 9am. He usually gets up at 6am. After half-an-hour for washing and breakfast, he drives from his home near Liyuan Subway Station to the World Trade Center (Guomao). Then he takes the East Third Ring Road from there, passing Liangmaqiao, Sanyuanqiao, Anzhen and Renmin University. Finally, he turns north to arrive at Zhongguancun.

"It usually takes me at least two hours," John sighed, "When there is a traffic jam, I really don't know how long it will take, and usually the traffic is terrible at the Third Ring Road and Zhongguancun Street. Every morning, I get up and think that there is quite a trip ahead of me."

Things started to change when he was surfing on the Internet and found out that there was a number of netizens on Tianya.cn and Mop.com discussing the most convenient way to travel from where they live to where they work.

What's special is that they were all recommending public transportation and suggesting eco-friendly traveling. John posted his home and office addresses online and quickly got a response.

A netizen Lolacast, who has a similar situation, gave her suggestion. "I usually get up at 7am, and head for the subway. I start at Liyuan Subway Station. After 20 minutes I can get to Sihui. I get off there and take bus No 402 from Sihui to Liangmaqiao and then change to No. 300 from Liangmaqiao to Renmin University. After that, I choose any bus going from Renmin University to Zhongguancun."

Dark Shout, the website moderator, had a better idea. "You can take the subway from Liyuan Station and change to Line One then change to the loop line at Fuxingmen. After that, take the loop line to Xizhimen. You will find there are a lot of buses going from Xizhimen to Zhongguancun, but if you want you can get off at Renmin University and walk to your office. For one thing, the traffic is really bad and for another, it will be good for your health."

John was very satisfied with the suggestion. He tried once and found out it took less time – only one and half hours. The most important thing was he was living a more "eco-friendly" way of life.

"Using public transport can not only save your time but also help you to be environmentally friendly. Actually, there are many people like me who live far away from the office. Many people have contested the driving plans and advise on the most convenient route."

Do you have a similar problem as John Zhou? Why not go online and see if you can find help to save your self time and cut down on your fuel use.

## New spirit of city bicycles

By Gan Tian

Riding a bike is one of the most eco-friendly means of transport. It saves fuel, time and money, helps you improve your fitness and also reduces heavy traffic and cuts pollution. Recently, some world cities have been putting a higher priority on bike use, and the old-fashioned bicycle has even become rather fashionable in some European countries.

The Netherlands has a product called Bikedispenser – a fully automated bicycle rental station. This means that at locations where you might like to use a bike, such as a train station, transportation hub or parking garage, you can rent a bike quickly and easily.

If you are a Bikedispenser member, you will get a chargecard. Put your Bikedispenser card in front of the reader at any rental station and, within a few seconds, a bike will emerge ready for you to use. Confirm by pushing the OK button and take the bike out of the dispenser.

When you return the bike, just put it into the special slot. The sliding door will open itself and then push the bike in until the rear wheel hits the mount. Confirm with the OK button, and the bike will be taken into the machine. You must wait until the sliding door closes completely and this ends your transaction.

You may have noticed a similar idea being pedaled in Beijing. Twenty bicycle-rental outlets opened just last week.

In the last issue of *Beijing Today's "News U Can Use"* we told you where to rent a bicycle in Beijing. You pay only 100 yuan with 400 yuan deposit for one year's service. Short-term rental costs five yuan per hour or 20 yuan per day.

Though the system here is not as automatic as those in European countries, it is seen by some as progress.

Tired of cars? Go out on a limb and grab a bike instead.



# Nobel laureates speak on Green Beijing

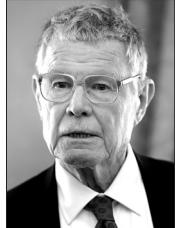
By Huang Daohen

Easing the conflict between economic development and environmental protection has been in the spotlight since "Green Beijing"

was first coined.

Four Nobel laureates participated in the Nobel Laureates Beijing Forum, which was held last month, gave their opinions.

## Health and comfort top priority



Thomas Schelling

The people's health and comfort should not be affected while a country makes efforts to keep a balance between environmental protection and economic development, Thomas Schelling, Nobel laureate in Economics, said.

"Developing countries, particularly big ones like China, should not sacrifice their own development to mitigate environmental change," Schelling said.

Though a master in economics, Schelling said he has paid close attention to potential climate change. Schelling always tries to address how serious climate change will become and how it will affect the earth.

## Heavy industry should be relocated



Edmund Phelps

The option to relocate heavy industry sites should be a priority for Beijing to "green" its environment, Edmund Phelps, last year's Nobel Prize winner in economics, said.

Phelps said the economy can promote energy conservation in three main areas. Relocation of factories is the first, he said.

Beijing has relocated some pollution-oriented enterprises in its urban area to places where they will have less impact on the city's environment. He stressed that relocation of the Shougang factory is a good example to be promoted in other cities in China.

"If this could be maintained for forty or fifty years, China's environment would be greatly improved," he added.

## Environmental issues demand collaboration



Rudolph Marcus

Environmental concerns are complex, and the problems caused demand collective efforts, Rudolph Marcus, 84, Nobel laureate in chemistry, said.

Though not specialist in environmental issues, he does concern himself with them and has many ideas to share.

"It is a considerable problem, and I think the government should take it seriously. I am sure something more will be done about it, but there is a lot to do. The damage to the environment is considerable, and the effort to repair it will take a long time," he said.

## More substitute energy resources



Walter Kohn  
CFP Photos

The best way to green the city is to develop more substitute and clean energy resources, Walter Kohn, chemistry Nobel Prize laureate, said.

In his speech at the forum "Coal and Uranium: Two Important but Dangerous Energy Sources," Kohn pointed out one huge challenge that mankind will meet this century: "The rapid rise in atmospheric carbon dioxide, largely due to the burning of fossil fuels, is contributing to global warming and rising sea levels," Kohn said.

Kohn said coal is an indispensable resource for China. He predicts that during this month or no later than next month, China will likely surpass America to become the number one contributor to global warming.

He pointed out that China is very reliant on coal, and the carbon dioxide it produces is the main factor leading to global warming. However, Kohn said it is not right to totally blame China. "China's average coal consumption is much lower than that of America," he said.

He said coal and uranium are dangerous energy sources. Coal causes air-pollution and global warming; uranium enables nuclear weapons proliferation, attracts terrorists and presents disposal problems.

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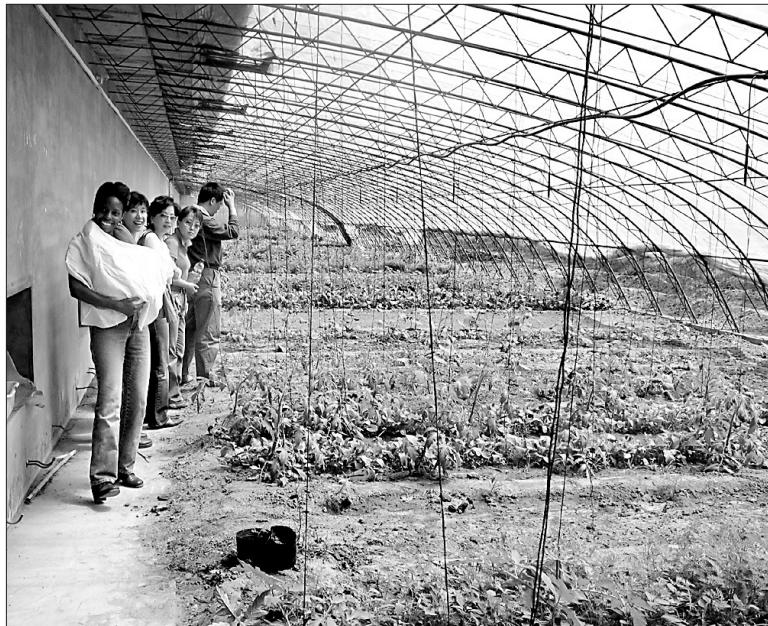
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More and more environmental NGOs are starting in tandem with increased environmental awareness. *Beijing Today* talked with some local green communities to see how their events are running. There are also a few well-known, eco-friendly organizations with contact info. Keep an eye out for their regular meetings.

## Organic tours becoming popular



Local organic diners visit De Run Wu's organic farm.

Photo provided by Liora Pearlman

By Annie Wei

Two years ago, organic foods were still too new a topic for Beijing. Now, you can find organic fresh vegetables delivered from the US in the supermarket of the Pacific Department Store on East Third Ring Road.

Paul Kronenberg, one of the founders of Braille Without Borders, an organization which helps blind Tibetan children in Lhasa, said shipping organic cheese to developed cities like Beijing or Shanghai is a mistake. The reason is simple: the point of producing and eating organic food is for a better environment and health. The long distance these products are shipped negates any benefits.

Many Beijing diners wonder, how can people check if organic food purchased in the supermarket or delivered is actually organic? What if the sellers just slap an "organic" label on common products and jack up the price?

To combat doubts, some people have formed organic consumers groups like Liora Pearlman's Beijing Organic

Consumers Yahoo Group. Anyone interested in more information can join at [health.groups.yahoo.com/group/beijing\\_organic\\_consumers](http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/beijing_organic_consumers).

They provide organic information for the capital and have 150 members – mostly expats – who share resources, ideas and information, such as where to find organic products like flax seed oil, organic noodles and other relevant articles and newsletters.

The group has organized visits to some organic farms like De Run Wu, run by Ji Yunliang, a Buddhist and professor, and Green Yard Organic Dairy products, the only producer of organic milk and yogurt.

### De Run Wu

A small organic farm that delivers fresh vegetables.

Tel: 8459 0809

Email: [jyunliang@vip.163.com](mailto:jyunliang@vip.163.com)

### Organic Farm Ltd

Email: [organicfarm@126.com](mailto:organicfarm@126.com)

### Green Yard

Email: [organiclife@greenyard.cn](mailto:organiclife@greenyard.cn)

Website: [greenyard.cn](http://greenyard.cn)

## Drinking and socializing with a green theme

By Annie Wei

Although Green Drinks has only been in Beijing for six months, the bar-style hang-out environment has already met with wide acclaim from Beijing's young international community.

Green Drinks was founded in the UK in 1989, and has rapidly become a worldwide event. It is open to everyone, and aims to raise awareness of green, sustainable development through networking, socializing and information exchange.

So far, Beijing Green Drinks has met six times. It drew 40-50 participants each time. The first meeting was in April and attracted as many as 100 people, including some government officials from the China's State Environmental Protection Administration, NGOs, media and the private sector.

Jenny Chu, 28, an American-born

Chinese and founder of Beijing Green Drinks, said holding the monthly event is not difficult. "Most people I met already have a strong interest in environmental issues. They are coming to meet others who share their interest."

Chu, who works for ESD Sinophere, an environmental consulting company, has lived in the capital for a little over a year. With job connections to various environmental NGOs and a passion for environmental topics, Chu was surprised to learn Beijing still didn't have a Green Drinks.

"There are 104 cities in the world that have a branch of Green Drinks," Chu said, "I was thinking of organizing one here for a long time."

Green Drinks Beijing has become a monthly event, and is scheduled on the second Tuesday of every month.

To raise knowledge about the event, Chu places ads in local English magazines and sends a monthly newsletter to all participants.

"It has become word of mouth," Chu said, "People who get the newsletter forward it to others."

Aside from providing a place to network, people looking for information and connections related to different environmental and sustainability issues, Chu invites speakers from different environmental NGOs every time.

At May's meeting, there were three speakers who introduced what their organizations did. Yi Shui, deputy editor from Chinadialogue, an independent, non-profit organization based in London and Beijing, spoke on how the group invited two journalists from the BBC and CCTV to write about how they tried to reduce



Green Drinks at Ritan Park

Photo by Tian Yufeng

carbons they emitted on a daily basis.

Tom Miller, a foreign journalist, said, "There were more than 100 people last time I came at 10:30pm," Miller said. "It attracted a lot of foreigners working in Beijing and young Chinese people who are concerned about the environment. It's great to see a very international idea like Green Drinks in Beijing."

## Local green communities

### Global Village of Beijing

Founded in 1996, GVB is one of China's earliest and best-known environmental NGOs. Their early efforts include a "green communities" project in urban areas of Beijing to develop a community-based awareness of environmental issues and practical measures to improve the local environment and reduce the impact of human consumption.

GVB has been a major player in a "26-degree campaign" that encourages businesses, government offices and families to save energy by setting their air conditioners to no lower than 26 degrees during the long, hot summers. It also educates people about greener lifestyles.

Interactive activities include tree planting, recycling, water quality inspection, recycled paper production and experiments with renewable energy. Some

programs also offer "rural immersion," where urban participants live and eat with rural families, learn about organic foods and gain firsthand understanding of the challenges facing China's rural areas. For more information, visit [gvcchina.org.cn](http://gvcchina.org.cn)

Where: Room C-301, Huanzhan Gongyu, 12, Yumin Lu, Chaoyang  
Tel: 8225 2046

### Friends of Nature

Founded in 1994 and with ten full-time staffers, Friends of Nature is one of the most powerful green NGOs in China.

It started with a focus on wildlife protection and campaigns to protect the snub-nosed monkey in Yunnan.

The organization retains a strong, biodiversity conservation emphasis, but is also engaged in a wide variety of broader issues, including combating deforestation in the southwest, grasslands protection in

the north, promoting green consumption, energy-efficiency, organic foods, recycling and bicycling.

Register at [fon.org.cn](http://fon.org.cn)'s newsletter, you will receive their activities in advance.

Where: 368 room, Wanbo Building, 53 Ganyu Hutong, Dongcheng  
Tel: 6523 2040

### Green Cross

This organization has established "Public Good Boutiques": booths in public plazas run by university students who sell recycled and eco-friendly products and advocate green consumption. A pilot "Building New Villages" project encourages locally-initiated development, environmental conservation and cultural preservation efforts. It promotes a "Five Mountains Model" that includes recycling and solid waste management, water and sanitation projects and construction

of a teahouse as a center for cultural renaissance. For more information, visit [lsz.org.cn](http://lsz.org.cn).

Where: Room 302, Yinghua Shixianxiao Xilou, 16, Yinghuayuan, Chaoyang  
Tel: 6442 9281

### Green Web Alliance

Founded in 1999, this NGO helps other NGOs develop a web presence and, through its own site, promotes "online action with real-world results." By way of example, it cites a 2004 online campaign to protect the Beijing Zoo. This attracted local media coverage and led to the shelving of plans for the Zoo's relocation.

For more information, please check [green-web.org](http://green-web.org)  
Where: Room 1-608, 2, Jiaodaokou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng  
Tel: 8400 1489

(By Wei Ying)

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By Gan Tian

If you still haven't had a chance to read the following comments in websites, take a look at this page. They are really witty!

Choose from our range of recycling bins, composters, bamboo kitchenware, recycled tin foil, cookbooks, water filters, smell busters and even delicious organic extra virgin olive oil to use in the kitchen!  
[Naturalcollection.com](http://Naturalcollection.com)

I would like to spend more money buying washing-powder without phosphorous. It is good for the water and also for clothes. I strongly recommend this kind of washing-powder.  
**Guo Xianglu,** housewife

In the district where I live, there are many people who have pets, but they always do nothing when their dogs defecate in public places. I feel ashamed for them.  
**Jiang Hua,** journalist

I wish I were a Wizard like Harry Potter. Then I would turn my kindergarten into Hogwarts. We need more trees and a bigger playground where we can play games.  
**Xue Ning,** six years old

The recycling system in Beijing is still a mess. Recycling trash bins are not properly used here. I'll give you an example. In my country, if someone throws a milk carton into paper trash bin, they will be scolded. There is a thin plastic material covering the container, so it should be put into the plastic trash bin. Beijing should improve this system, I suggest.  
**Gander Schurz,** from Germany

We use the 3Rs to make the world a nicer place to live in. We call it being eco-friendly. The 3Rs are Reduce, Re-use and Recycle. "Reduce" means making less rubbish and not using as much energy. "Re-use" means finding other uses for things instead of throwing them away. "Recycle" means turning the rubbish into something useful rather than just discarding it. Everyone can help, including you. The fourth R is missing and we need your help to find it.  
**Environmental Intelligence Unit**

I asked my daughter to make an "eco-friendly notebook", in which to keep a record of her environmental protection habits. For example, selling plastic bottles for recycling purposes. I read one of her entries saying "I forgot to turn off the lights once and it cost a lot of energy." It is really good for her to maintain this type of thinking.  
**Yang Xueru,** housewife

Beijing's traffic is really bad, and I suggest people drive less and walk more. It is good for the air and your health.  
**Jeremy Paris,** from Australia

Spit, spit, spit! Please don't spit on the streets any more. It's really a bad habit. Maybe if the government had better controls on the air quality, there wouldn't be so many people spitting on the streets so casually.  
**Luo Xia,** student in Beijing No 8 Middle School

Choose eco-resorts if you want to travel. The eco-resort provides the perfect base for travelers who want to combine quality and comfort with environmental sensitivity, like to Qiandaohu Lake in Hangzhou.  
**Ralton Armstrong,** from Britain

I went to Shijingshan District today and I found it was quite clean there. I have eco-friendly way of thinking. For example, I spit the gum into the gum wrapper before throwing it away. Every little act like that shows whether a person is eco-friendly or not.  
**Yang Chen,** sales person at STORZ

The water heater in my house is using solar power energy. Is that eco-friendly? Yes? Wow, I am so proud!  
**Jane Zhang,** IT worker

When delving into this subject, I think education is important. Please familiarize your children with the concepts of environmental protection. It is a very important part of our children's education to adopt these ideas early. Schools and academic institutes should have courses on the subject. I know that our university is doing well. We have courses on green media, forestry protection, genetic food, and others.  
**Hua Yongyuan,** sophomore in Beijing Forestry University